



No. 121 Rs. 3.00

Veer Dhaval

AN ADAPTATION OF NATH MADHAV'S FAMOUS MARATHI CLASSIC



"Veer Dhaval" is one of Nath Madhav's better known Marathi novels and this Amar Chitra Katha is based on it. The novel as a literary form was unknown to our country till the advent of the British. The early novels in Indian languages were either translations of the European originals or were based on them. Veer Dhaval is a novel with a historical background. Being a story of court intrigue, it involves a number of characters. To enable our readers to keep track of them we have prepared a list of the major characters.



KEERTI VARMA - the murdered master of Fort Ajinkya.



CHANDA VARMA - Keerti Varma's brother. The present master of Fort Ajinkya and a henchman of the king of Kalyan.



RANARAG - a servant in Chanda Varma's pay.



VANITA - the maid who saves Veer Dhaval and who appears later as Vanachari.



VEER DHAVAL - Keerti Varma's son; brought up by Satyashreya.



SATYASHREYA - master of Fort Lalit and a loyal chieftain.

CHANDRASENA AND LALITA -



son and daughter of Satyashreya.



VIJJAL - one of Satyashreya's attendants.



CHANDRACHUD - master of Fort Prasad, in league with Chanda Varma.

DURJAT AND UNMATT -
dacoit brothers,
operating from
their hideout,
Lion's Den, near
Fort Ajinkya.



SALHAN - an arm-smith residing at Rajmahendri, the Chalukya capital.

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Editor: Anant Pai

Script: Malati Deshpande Illustrations: Pratap Mulick

VEER DHAVAL



CENTURIES AGO, CHANDRAKETU, THE CHALUKYA KING, RULED FROM RAJMAHENDRI, HIS CAPITAL. HIS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS INCLUDED SEVERAL VASSAL CHIEFTAINS. AMONG THEM WERE KEERTI VARMA, MASTER OF FORT AJINKYA; CHANDRACHUD, MASTER OF FORT PRASAD; AND SATYASHREYA, OF FORT LALIT. ONE NEW YEAR'S DAY, TWO HOODED FIGURES MURDERED KEERTI VARMA AND HIS WIFE. THEIR SON, HOWEVER, WAS SAVED BY HIS MAID. ONE OF THE TWO MONKS WHO WITNESSED THE ASSASSINATION WAS ALSO MURDERED. THE OTHER GOT AWAY.



THE CRUEL DEED ACCOMPLISHED, RANARAG RAN TO HIS MASTER, CHANDA VARMA, THE BROTHER OF KEERTI VARMA.



I WILL LIVE AT RAJMAHENDRI. YOU STAY HERE AND MANAGE THE AFFAIRS OF THIS FORT.



THE MAID, VANITA, MEANWHILE, HAD ESCAPED WITH THE CHILD TO FORT LALIT.



I'LL LEAVE HIM HERE. THE GOOD CHIEFTAIN AND HIS WIFE WILL BRING HIM UP WITH THEIR SON, CHANDRASENA.



THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN SATYASHREYA AND HIS WIFE SAW THE BABY —



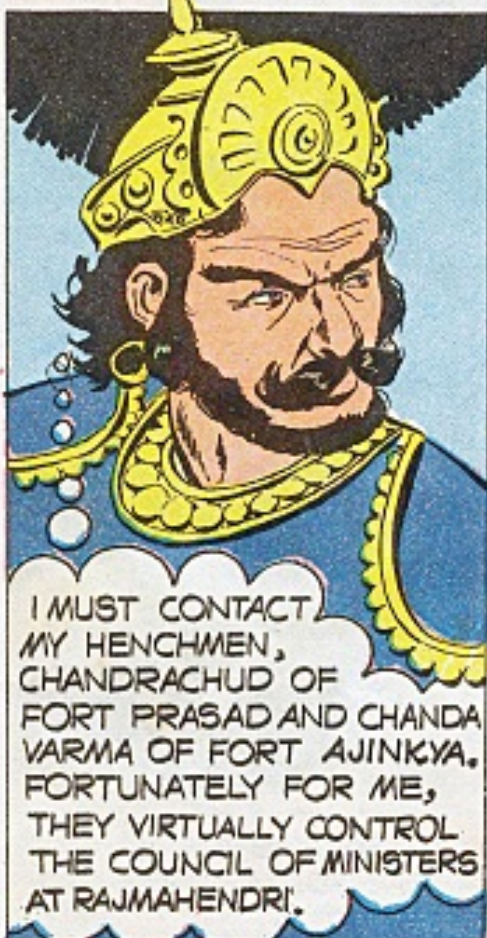
YOU POOR INFANT! WHO COULD HAVE SO CRUELY ABANDONED YOU?

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL CHILD! MAY I KEEP HIM?

WHY NOT? WE'LL CALL HIM VEER * DHAVAL *



TWENTY-FOUR YEARS LATER, THE CHALUKYA KING DIED. A SPY BROUGHT THE NEWS TO THE KING OF KALYAN.



WHY DON'T YOU INVITE SATYASHREYA AND HIS CHILDREN TO STAY FOR A WHILE AT FORT AJINKYA?

A GOOD IDEA, CHANDRACHUD! THAT SHOULD KEEP HIM OUT OF RAJMAHENDRI AND OUR WAY.

WITH THE INVITATION, WHY DON'T YOU SEND A PROPOSAL FOR HIS DAUGHTER'S HAND? THE ALLIANCE WILL GIVE YOU A HOLD OVER HIM.

HE MAY NOT AGREE. I AM FIFTY AND HIS DAUGHTER HAS JUST TURNED SIXTEEN! LET'S SEE.

WHEN THE PROPOSAL AND THE INVITATION REACHED SATYASHREYA, HOWEVER, HE WAS DELIGHTED.

I'LL ACCEPT. WHAT BETTER MATCH COULD I MAKE FOR MY DAUGHTER? THE WIFE OF A POWERFUL CHIEFTAIN AND THE MISTRESS OF FORT AJINKYA! LALITA IS LUCKY. BUT I WILL NOT SAY ANYTHING TO HER YET.

SO, ALONG WITH DHAVAL, CHANDRASENA AND LALITA, SATYASHREYA CAME TO FORT AJINKYA.



ONE EVENING, AS THE THREE YOUNGSTERS WERE OUT FOR A WALK, DHAVAL, NOW A STRAPPING YOUTH OF TWENTY-FOUR, TURNED TO LALITA.

LALITA, I WANT TO MARRY YOU. DO YOU CARE FOR ME?

DO YOU DOUBT THAT?



SUDDENLY, A HAGGARD OLD WOMAN JUMPED OUT FROM BEHIND A BUSH.

YOU MAKE
A PERFECT PAIR!
GOD BLESS
YOU.

WHO
COULD SHE
BE?



CHANDRASENA RAN AFTER THE OLD WOMAN BUT SHE ESCAPED INTO THE WOODS



HE GAVE UP THE CHASE AND WENT TO SATYASHREYA.

FATHER, DHAVAL LOVES
LALITA. I JUST HEARD
HIM SPEAK TO HER
ABOUT IT.

HOW DARE HE! I HAVE
PROMISED LALITA TO
CHANDA VARMA. FROM
TODAY, DHAVAL SHALL BE
CONFINED TO HIS ROOM.
VIJAL WILL TAKE HIS
MEALS TO HIM.



BUT
CHANDA
VARMA IS
FIFTY AND
SHE IS
ONLY SIX-
TEEN!

THAT DOESN'T MATTER.
THINK OF HIS STATUS
AND HIS WEALTH. HE
WILL BE COMING HERE
FOR THE NEW YEAR'S
FEAST. BRING LALITA
TO ME.



WHEN LALITA HEARD OF SATYASHREYA'S DECISION, SHE FAINTED.

ATTEND TO HER.
SHE WILL COME ROUND
SOON. THIS IS
ONLY THE INI-
TIAL SHOCK.



AS SATYASHREYA AND CHANDRASENA CAME OUT OF THE ROOM, THEY MET RANARAG, CHANDA VARMA'S SERVANT.

OH! I'VE BEEN WANTING TO ASK YOU SOMETHING. IS IT TRUE THAT THE OLD MASTER OF THE CASTLE PRESENTS HIMSELF AT THE NEW YEAR'S FEAST?



RANARAG WAS QUIET FOR A MINUTE. THEN—

YES, HE DOES! IN FACT, HIS GHOST OFTEN COMES ON OTHER DAYS TOO. HIS VISIT IS HERALDED BY THE FALL OF THE FAMILY HEIRLOOMS—THE ANCIENT HELMET AND ARMOUR—IN THE ARMOURY. HE AND HIS WIFE WERE MURDERED, IF YOU REMEMBER.



HAVEN'T THEY CAUGHT THE MURDERERS YET?



NO!

THE NEXT DAY, CHANDA VARMA ARRIVED. WHEN HE WAS ABOUT TO CROSS THE MAIN GATE, HE HEARD A LOUD CLANG.



OH NO! THE HELMET AND ARMOUR HAVE FALLEN IN THE ARMOURY. SOME EVIL IS SURE TO BEFALL ME.

CLANG! CLANG!

LOOK! HE SHIVERS WITH FRIGHT!



WHEN CHANDA VARMA ENTERED THE CASTLE AND SAW LALITA, HOWEVER, HE SOON RECOVERED FROM HIS FRIGHT.



THAT NIGHT, WHEN VIJJAL WENT TO DHAVAL WITH HIS DINNER —



I WILL DO ANYTHING TO PREVENT HER FROM MARRYING THAT OLD CHIEFTAIN.



AFTER VIJJAL LEFT, THE LIGHT IN THE ROOM FIRST BECAME VERY BRIGHT...



...THEN FADED AND FINALLY WENT OUT.

A FLASH OF RAINBOW COLOURS APPEARED ON THE WALL AND...



...THE WALL BECAME TRANSPARENT. DHAVAL COULD SEE AND HEAR WHAT WENT ON IN LALITA'S ROOM.



ALAS! MY HOPES
ARE SHATTERED. I'LL
END MY LIFE AND
WITH IT MY
MISERY.

LALITA!
NO!
PLEASE
DON'T.

THE LIGHTS WENT OUT, THEN REAPPEARED AND ANOTHER WALL BECAME TRANSPARENT. DHAVAL COULD NOW SEE AND HEAR WHAT WENT ON IN SATYASHREYA'S ROOM.



THE HELMET AND
ARMOUR FELL AS
CHANDA VARMA ENTER-
ED. IT'S A WARNING!
SURELY SOME MIS-
FORTUNE AWAITS
HIM.

NOT AT ALL. ONCE
LALITA IS MARRIED
TO HIM, ALL WILL BE
WELL. SHE'LL SOON
FORGET DHAVAL.

NEVER!

THE LIGHTS WENT OUT AGAIN. SECONDS LATER, WHEN YET ANOTHER WALL BECAME TRANSPARENT, DHAVAL COULD SEE AND HEAR WHAT WENT ON IN CHANDA VARMA'S ROOM.



MY BROTH-
ER'S GHOST
IS HERE AGAIN.
I MUST BE CARE-
FUL. I'M GOING
TO MARRY THE
BEAUTIFUL
LALITA.

NEVER!
SHE'LL NEVER
MARRY YOU IF
I CAN HELP
IT.

DAY BROKE. IN HIS ROOM, DHAVAL REMAINED IM-MERSED IN HIS THOUGHTS.

IT'S NEW YEAR'S DAY TODAY. THE OLD MASTER OF THE CASTLE WILL PRESENT HIMSELF AS USUAL. I WONDER WHY HE DOES IT!



MEANWHILE, AT THE FEAST, AS CHANDA VARMA WAS ABOUT TO OCCUPY THE SEAT MEANT FOR HIM —



IT WAS THE GHOST OF THE MURDERED MASTER OF THE CASTLE. IT CAME UP TO LALITA AND POINTING A FINGER AT CHANDA VARMA SHOOK ITS HEAD AS IF TO SAY "NO."

HOW STRANGE!
I'LL TELL DHAVAL
ALL, WHEN I
MEET. HIM.



THAT EVENING, JUST AS LALITA FINISHED TELLING DHAVAL ABOUT THE EVENTS AT THE FEAST, THE OLD HAG APPEARED ONCE AGAIN.



YOU MUST MARRY EACH OTHER. I, VANACHARI, WISH YOU ALL SUCCESS!

CHANDRASENA WHO WAS LOOKING FOR HIS SISTER, SUDDENLY CAME UPON THE SCENE.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE AT THIS HOUR, LALITA? RETURN HOME IMMEDIATELY. I'LL TEACH THIS SCOUNDREL A LESSON FOR MEETING YOU ON THE SLY.



TOWARDS NIGHTFALL, A WORRIED SATYASHREYA PACED UP AND DOWN HIS ROOM.

IT'S HOURS SINCE I SENT CHANDRASENA OUT TO FETCH LALITA. SHE HAS RETURNED. WHERE COULD HE HAVE GONE?



JUST THEN, CHANDA VARMA AND TWO FOREST GUARDS CHARGED INTO THE ROOM.

SIR, SEE WHAT WE'VE FOUND BY THE STREAM. WE FEAR YOUR SON HAS BEEN MURDERED.

CHANDRASENA'S SHIRT AND HEAD- DRESS! THE HILT OF DHAVAL'S SWORD!

WHAT!

DHAVAL SHALL BE IM- PRISONED IN THE CELLAR WITH HIS FEET CHAINED!



WHEN THE OTHERS LEFT, LALITA WEPT BITTERLY.

I AM THE CAUSE OF ALL THIS. BUT MY HEART TELLS ME THAT DHAVAL CANNOT BE GUILTY OF A FOUL MURDER.



A LITTLE LATER, CHANDA VARMA CAME TO HER.

IF YOU PROMISE TO BE MINE, DHAVAL CAN ESCAPE WITH HIS LIFE. OR ELSE... HE SHALL DIE.

THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO END ALL HIS TROUBLES.

I PROMISE. PLEASE SPARE HIS LIFE.



MEANWHILE, A TERRIBLE STORM HAD SUDDENLY BROKEN OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS. VANACHARI, WHO WAS IN THE WOODS, HEARD A GROAN.

WHO COULD IT BE?



JUST THEN, A FLASH OF LIGHTNING LIT THE SKY.

WHY! IT'S DURJAT, THE POWERFUL RICH DACOIT OF "LION'S DEN!"

YES, IT IS. I AM INJURED. PLEASE HELP ME REACH "LION'S DEN"



AT THE HIDEOUT, "LION'S DEN"

PROVIDENCE HAS LED ME HERE. I WONDER WHY!



SUDDENLY THE GOSSIP OF THE SERVANTS CAUGHT HER ATTENTION.

DO YOU KNOW THAT DHAVAL HAS BEEN IMPRISONED? HE'S BEEN CHARGED WITH THE MURDER OF CHANDRASENA.

WE TOO HAVE A PRISONER IN OUR CELLAR. HE WAS BROUGHT IN THIS MORNING. I AM TAKING HIS FOOD TO HIM RIGHT NOW.



VANACHARI'S CURIOSITY WAS AROUSED. SHE QUIETLY FOLLOWED HIM TO THE CELLAR.



WHEN SHE SAW THE PRISONER—

CHANDRASENA! YOU! HERE? BUT DHAVAL...

SHE HAS RECOGNISED HIM AND DURJAT AND UNMATT* HAVE GONE OUT TO FORT AJINKYA. I'D BETTER PUT HER IN THE CELLAR TOO!



* DURJAT'S BROTHER.

MEANWHILE, AT FORT AJINKYA, CHANDA VARMA WENT TO SEE DHAVAL.

LALITA WANTS ME TO FREE YOU. YOU MAY GO. TWO OF MY GUARDS WILL ESCORT YOU.



WHEN DHAVAL AND THE TWO GUARDS WERE ABOUT TO LEAVE, CHANDA VARMA DREW ONE OF THEM ASIDE.

FINISH HIM OFF WHEN YOU REACH THE WOODS!



AS THEY RODE OUT OF FORT AJINKYA, THEY ENCOUNTERED DURJAT, UNMATT AND A FEW MEN, RIDING TOWARDS THE CASTLE.

DURJAT AND UNMATT!
I MUST NOT LET THEM ESCAPE.



DHAVAL TOOK ON DURJAT AND SOON HAD HIM ON THE GROUND.

OUR LEADER HAS FALLEN.
CHARGE!



THEY RUSHED AT DHAVAL AND THE GUARDS. IN THE SCUFFLE THAT ENSUED, BOTH THE GUARDS WERE KILLED.



I'LL RIDE ON TO FORT AJINKYA AND DO WHAT I'D SET OUT TO DO — MAKE THE BEAUTY, LALITA MINE.

HE IS INJURED LET HIM GO. I'LL RIDE ON.



AFTER DHAVAL RODE SOME DISTANCE, HE CAME UPON A CRYSTAL PILLAR. NEAR IT STOOD THE GHOST.

GO BACK TO FORT AJINKYA.

I RESPECT YOUR COMMAND, SIR. I WILL!



DHAVAL TURNED HIS HORSE AND RODE TOWARDS FORT AJINKYA. AS HE NEARED THE CASTLE —

GOOD LORD! IT'S DURJAT AGAIN! HE'S ABDUCTING LALITA. NO WONDER THE GHOST ASKED ME TO RETURN.



HE SPRANG LIKE A LEOPARD AND TAKING DURJAT BY SURPRISE, GRABBED LALITA FROM HIM.

YOU SCOUNDREL! HOW DARE YOU TOUCH HER!



STUNNED, DURJAT RODE OFF.

I'LL GET EVEN WITH YOU SOME DAY, YOU BRAT.



HEARING THE COMMOTION, SATYASHREYA AND CHANDA VARMA CAME OUT.

POOR GIRL!
SHE'S UN-
CONSCIOUS.

WHAT HAPPENED?
LALITA, SPEAK TO ME.
I AM YOUR
FATHER.

LATER, WHEN LALITA REGAINED HER CONSCIOUSNESS —

DHAVAL! FATHER! THE DACOIT
TRIED TO KIDNAP ME. THANK
GOD I'M SAFE.

YES. THANK
GOD YOU'RE SAFE. BUT
DHAVAL WILL NOW HAVE
TO FACE A TRIAL. HE
SHOULD NOT
HAVE RE-
TURNED.

I WAS GUIDED
BY SUPER-
NATURAL POWERS.

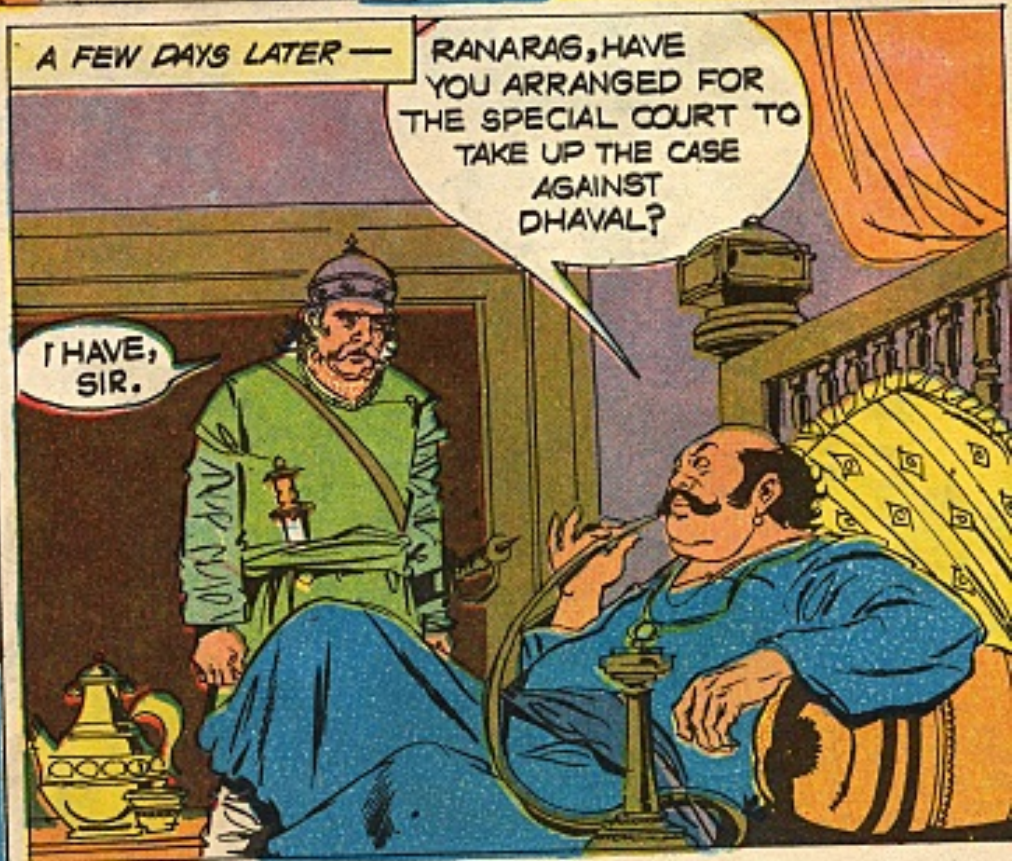
DHAVAL THEN TOLD THEM ABOUT
THE GHOST AT THE CRYSTAL
PILLAR. CHANDA VARMA WAS JEAL-
OUS AND AFRAID.

FOR SOME
REASON MY BROTH-
ER'S GHOST IS
PARTIAL TO DHAVAL
AND LALITA. I
MUST PLAY
MY CARDS
FAST.

A FEW DAYS LATER —

RANARAG, HAVE
YOU ARRANGED FOR
THE SPECIAL COURT TO
TAKE UP THE CASE
AGAINST
DHAVAL?

I HAVE,
SIR.



AT THE HEARING —



HIS MOTIVE? HE WANTED TO MARRY LALITA FOR WEALTH, POWER AND STATUS. CHANDRASENA WAS AGAINST THE MATCH, SO DHAVAL MURDERED HIM. LATER, HE WAS AFRAID, REPENTED AND CONFESSED TO CHANDA VARMA, BEGGING FOR HIS MERCY.



CHANDA VARMA AND RANARAG WITHOUT THE LEAST COMPUNCTION, GAVE FALSE EVIDENCE.

WHAT THE COURT ATTENDANT SAYS IS TRUE.



I SAW AND HEARD THE ACCUSED CONFESS HIS GUILT TO MY MASTER.



VEER DHAVAL, DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY IN YOUR DEFENCE?

I DO.



THAT DAY, WHEN CHANDRASENA SAW ME WITH HIS SISTER IN THE WOODS, HE WAS VERY ANGRY. HE ORDERED HER TO GO HOME, AND THEN STOOD GLARING AT ME.



"AFTER SHE HAD LEFT, A WILD BOAR SUDDENLY CAME CHARGING OUT OF THE WOODS AND WAS ABOUT TO ATTACK HIM."

CHANDRASENA!

"I THRUST MY SWORD INTO ITS NECK. THE BOAR DIED BUT MY SWORD BROKE INTO TWO. CHANDRASENA ESCAPED ALIVE."



"WHEN I RETURNED TO FORT AJINKYA, I WAS SUSPECTED OF CHANDRASENA'S MURDER AND IMPRISONED."

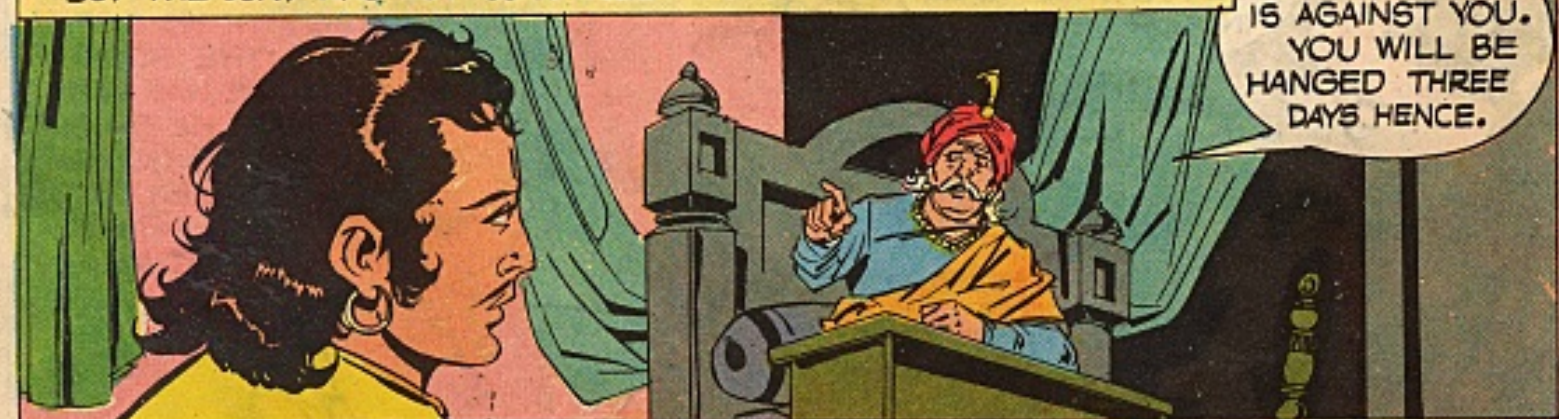


AS FOR THE TWO GUARDS WHO CAME TO ESCORT ME—THEY WERE KILLED BY THE DACOIT, DURJAT AND HIS HENCHMEN. I AM INNOCENT. THAT'S ALL.



BUT THE JURY WAS NOT CONVINCED. THE JUDGE GAVE THE VERDICT.

THE EVIDENCE IS AGAINST YOU. YOU WILL BE HANGED THREE DAYS HENCE.



MEANWHILE, AT "LION'S DEN" DURJAT WAS VERY HAPPY WHEN HE HEARD THE VERDICT.

MY WORST RIVAL IS OUT OF THE WAY. LALITA WILL SOON BE MINE. TONIGHT WE WILL HAVE RANARAG BROUGHT HERE. LET HIM SEE OUR PRISONERS. THEN WE WILL DICTATE TERMS.

ACCORDINGLY, THAT NIGHT THE PRISONERS WERE SHOWN TO RANARAG.

HOURS LATER, AT FORT AJINKYA, VIJAL SAW RANARAG COMING TOWARDS CHANDA VARMA'S ROOM.

HE LOOKS DISTURBED. I WILL HIDE MYSELF AND SEE WHAT HE HAS TO SAY.

RANARAG STOOD BEFORE CHANDA VARMA.

I COME FROM DURJAT. UNLESS YOU ARRANGE HIS MARRIAGE WITH LALITA, HE AND HIS TWO BROTHERS WILL PRODUCE SUCH EVIDENCE IN COURT AS WILL PROVE YOU GUILTY OF GIVING FALSE EVIDENCE.

AND IF I DO WHAT HE ASKS?

THE PRISONER IN THE "LION'S DEN" WILL BE SILENCED FOR EVER.

ALL RIGHT! I AGREE. COME. I WILL GIVE MY REPLY IN WRITING.

WHAT! THE SCOUNDREL IS WILLING TO SELL LALITA TO THE DACOITS!

VIJAL WAS INTRIGUED.

WHO IS THE PRISONER?
WHY SHOULD HE BE
SILENCED FOR EVER? I
MUST FIND OUT.
I'LL TAKE THE
COURT-BARD'S
HELP.



THE BARD AND VIJAL, POISING AS SINGER AND MUSICIAN,
GAINED ACCESS TO THE "LION'S DEN" WHERE THE DACTS
WERE CELEBRATING DURJAT'S VICTORY.



LATER —



THEY'RE
ALL DEAD
DRUNK!

QUICK! TO THE CELLAR.
DHAVAL WILL DIE TOMORROW
IF WE ARE NOT IN TIME.

EARLY NEXT MORNING, AT FORT AJINKYA, AS THE NOOSE WAS ABOUT TO FALL ROUND
DHAVAL'S NECK, A DAZZLING LIGHT LIT UP THE SKIES. ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE, THE
GHOST APPEARED AND POINTING TO THE GALLONS BHOOK HIS HEAD.



HE IS INNOCENT!
THE MASTER OF
THE CASTLE HAS
DECLARED IT.

ENOUGH OF
THAT NONSENSE!
PROCEED WITH
THE EXECU-
TION!

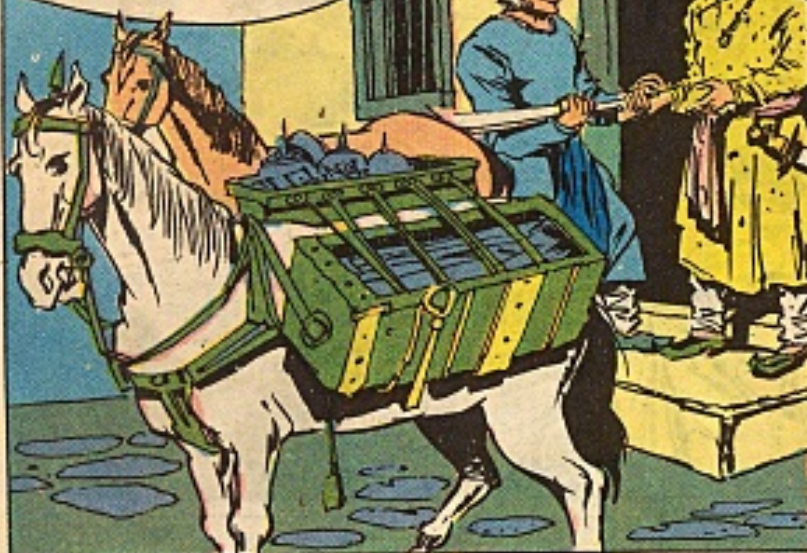
JUST THEN—

STOP! STOP!
HE'S INNOCENT!I AM ALIVE!
LOOK AT ME!VIJAL, CHANDRASENA, THE BARD AND VANACHARI
RAN TOWARDS DHAVAL.DEAR, DEAR
DHAVAL! THANK
GOD WE AR-
RIVED IN TIME.AH! MY SON! YOU ARE ALIVE.
THEN DHAVAL IS INNOCENT.
THERE IS MISCHIEF AFOOT.
LET US FLEE TO MY FRIEND,
THE MASTER OF FORT
ABHED.I SHALL GO TO
RAJMAHENDRI AND
SUE CHANDA VARMA
FOR GIVING FALSE
EVIDENCE.THE SCOUNDREL
WAS OUT TO SELL
LALITA TO THE
DACOITS.I MUST FOLLOW DHAVAL
TO RAJMAHENDRI. HE IS
STILL NOT SAFE.
HE KNOWS NOTHING
OF THE CONSPIRACY
OF CHANDA VARMA AND
CHANDRACHUD WITH
THE KING OF
KALYAN.VIJAL AND THE BARD WENT WITH DHAVAL TO RAJMAHENDRI WHERE THEY STAYED WITH
BALHAN, AN ARMSMITH, WHILE THERE—SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT
I SHOULD WAIT A FEW MORE
DAYS BEFORE I PRESENT MY
CASE. ALL DOES NOT SEEM TO
BE WELL AT THE CAPITAL.

THAT EVENING —

DHAVAL, I'M GOING TO FORT PRASAD TO DELIVER THESE ARMS TO CHANDRACHUD.

I'M FREE. I'LL GO WITH YOU, SALHAN, AND HELP YOU CARRY THEM.



WHEN THEY REACHED FORT PRASAD, SALHAN WENT IN. WHILE DHAVAL WAITED AT THE GATE, A MAN SUDDENLY RUSHED OUT OF THE CASTLE AND CAME UP TO HIM.

TAKE THIS AND RIDE TO THE RIGHT. OUR MEN WAIT THERE.



DHAVAL RODE WITH THE BUNDLE AND SOON MET WITH A GROUP OF CHIEFTAINS.

WHAT'S IN THIS BUNDLE? IT SEEMS TO BE ALIVE!

IT'S THE PRINCE. THE QUEEN HAS GIVEN BIRTH TO A SON.

CHANDRACHUD BROUGHT HIM OUT OF THE PALACE IN SECRET. HE IS TO BE KEPT IN SUMITRASEN'S HOUSE.



DHAVAL WAS STUNNED. HE DREW SUMITRASEN, A LOYAL CHIEFTAIN, ASIDE.

YOU HAVE COMMITTED A BLUNDER. THE PEOPLE WILL REBEL IF THEY KNOW THAT THE PRINCE HAS BEEN STOLEN. THERE WILL BE CHAOS IN THE KINGDOM, AND THE KING OF KALYAN MAY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION.

YOU ARE RIGHT! IT WAS CHANDRACHUD'S IDEA. HE SAID IT WAS FOR THE SAFETY OF THE PRINCE. WE WERE CARRIED AWAY BY HIS WILY WORDS.



WE MUST RESTORE
THE PRINCE TO
THE QUEEN.

I'M
WILLING.
BUT HOW
SHALL WE
DO IT?



BRING THE PRINCE
OUT AT NIGHT. I'LL
WAIT FOR YOU. WE'LL
TAKE HIM BACK TO
THE PALACE.

SO THAT'S
IT! I'D BETTER
WARN
CHANDRACHUD.



THE SPY IMMEDIATELY DISCLOSED WHAT HE HAD
HEARD TO CHANDRACHUD.

THIS WILL UPSET
THE KING OF
KALYAN'S PLANS
TO ANNEX THE
KINGDOM AND HE
WILL NEVER FOR-
GIVE ME FOR IT.

IMPRISON
SUMITRASEN.
BRING THE
PRINCE TO
ME AND...



... DECLARE
DHAVAL A
TRAITOR!



UNAWARE OF WHAT HAD TAKEN PLACE, VEER DHAVAL RODE TO THE GATES OF FORT PRASAD,
AS SOON AS NIGHT FELL.

IS THAT YOU, SUMITRASEN?
YOU HAVE KEPT YOUR WORD
AND BROUGHT THE
PRINCE!

PLEASE
LISTEN.
THE CHILD
IS...



WE'LL TALK LATER.
WE MUST GET OUT
OF HERE FAST.

AT A SAFE DISTANCE, DHAVAL UNCOVERED THE
BUNDLE TO GIVE THE INFANT A BREATH OF AIR. HE
WAS SHOCKED TO FIND IT COLD AND STIFF.

I WAS
TRYING TO
TELL YOU ALL THE
WHILE... THE
CHILD IS DEAD.

THE
PRINCE,
DEAD?

NOT THE PRINCE.
MY SON. PLEASE GIVE
MY DEAD CHILD BACK TO ME.
I AM NOT SUMITRASEN.
HE HAS BEEN
IMPRISONED BY
CHANDRACHUD.

NO!

DHAVAL FAINTED, LEAVING HIM THERE, THE
OTHER RODE AWAY.

WHEN DHAVAL RECOVERED —

VANACHARI!
YOU? HOW
DID YOU
GET HERE?

I'VE BEEN
FOLLOWING
YOU.

THEN PLEASE GO TO
FORT PRASAD AND
GET NEWS ABOUT
SUMITRASEN AND
THE PRINCE.

I WONDER
WHY SHE
IS SO GOOD
TO ME?



VANACHARI RETURNED AT MIDNIGHT.

CHANDRACHUD HAS
THE PRINCE. HE HAS
DECLARED YOU A TRAI-
TOR. SUMITRASEN IS TO
BE EXECUTED EARLY
TOMORROW
MORNING.

WE MUST
SAVE HIM.



TOGETHER THEY WORKED OUT A PLAN.

... SO BEFORE
SUNRISE, WE MEET
BY THE GATES OF
FORT PRASAD. YOU
WILL BE READY
WITH THE
HORSES.



THE NEXT MORNING CHANDA VARMA MET
CHANDRACHUD.

IS ALL GOING
SMOOTHLY,
CHANDRACHUD?
I HEARD THAT
NO ONE WAS
WILLING TO
EXECUTE
SUMITRASEN!



WHAT YOU HEARD IS TRUE, CHANDA
VARMA. HE IS VERY POPULAR BUT
WE FOUND AN OUTSIDER
WHO HAD AN OLD SCORE
TO SETTLE
WITH HIM.



AS THE EXECUTIONER RAISED HIS AXE—

WHO ARE YOU?
LET ME KNOW
YOUR NAME
BEFORE I DIE.
I DO NOT
REMEMBER
WRONGING
ANYONE.



I'M DHAVAL. QUICK!
TAKE THIS DAGGER
AND CHARGE OUT
OF HERE.



IN AN INSTANT, BRANDISHING THEIR WEAPONS, THE TWO OF THEM RUSHED THROUGH THE STUNNED CROWD.

HE'S
MADE HIS
ESCAPE!

WHO COULD
HIS SAVI-
OUR BE?

I CAN'T
SAY I'M
NOT GLAD.
HE IS A GOOD
MAN AND WE
HAVE TOO FEW
OF THEM.



AT THE GATES OF THE FORT—



WE CAN'T
THANK YOU
ENOUGH, VANA-
CHARI. I'LL
GO BACK TO
RAJMAHENDRI.
MY FRIENDS THERE
MUST BE WOR-
RIED ABOUT ME.

I'LL GO
BACK TO
FORT
AJINKYA.

AND I'LL GO
TO FORT ABHED
AND GIVE SATYASHREYA
ALL THE NEWS.

WHEN DHAVAL REACHED SALHAN'S HOUSE AT
RAJMAHENDRI —

WHERE HAVE YOU
BEEN? WHEN I
CAME OUT OF
CHANDRACHUD'S
HOUSE YOU
WERE NOT
THERE.



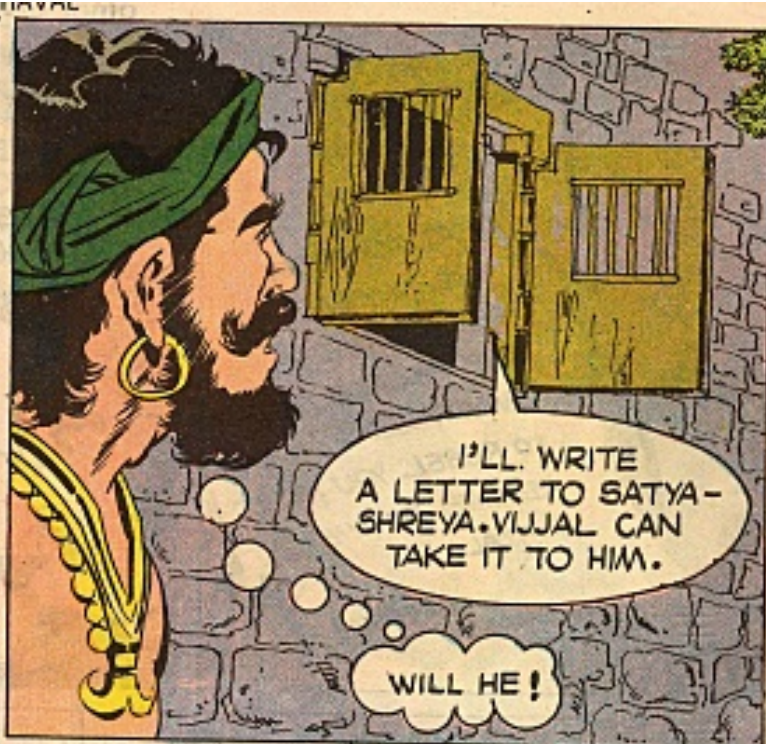
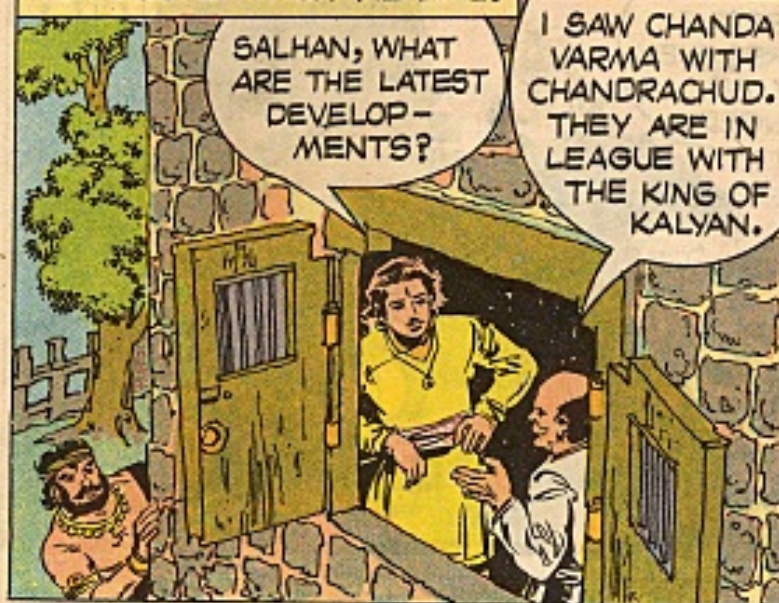
DHAVAL!
... DURJAT!



A—A—AH

I SAID
I'D GET EVEN
WITH YOU
ONE DAY.

DHAVAL, HOWEVER, DID NOT DIE. AFTER A MONTH OF CAREFUL NURSING HE WAS ABLE TO RESUME A NORMAL LIFE.



AS VIJAL WAS CARRYING THE LETTER TO SATYASHREYA—



MEANWHILE, IN THE ENEMY CAMP—

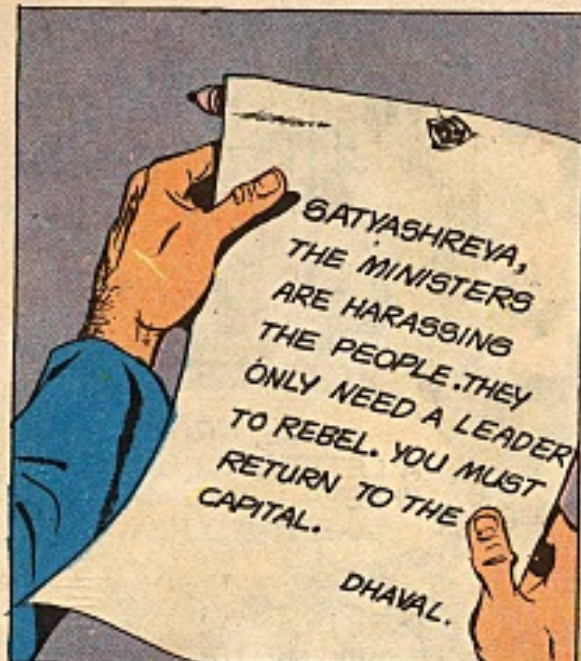
RANARAG, ALL I NEED IS EVIDENCE TO PROVE THAT SATYASHREYA AND HIS SON ARE TRAITORS. THEN ALL OUR ENEMIES WILL BE EXECUTED, ONCE THEY ARE OUT OF THE WAY, I'LL FINISH DURJAT AND UNMATT TOO, THEN LALITA WILL BE MINE AND ONLY MINE.



AND DURJAT ENTERED.



A JUBILANT CHANDA VARMA TOOK THE LETTER TO CHANDRA-CHUD AND THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.



SATYASHREYA,
THE MINISTERS
ARE HARASSING
THE PEOPLE. THEY
ONLY NEED A LEADER
TO REBEL. YOU MUST
RETURN TO THE
CAPITAL.

DHAVAL.



ARREST THE
TRAITORS! THEY
MUST BE
HANGED.

WHEN THE NEWS REACHED SALHAN
AND DHAVAL —

WE MUST FLEE
TO FORT ABHED
AND WARN SATYA-
SHREYA.

WE WILL
TAKE DIFFER-
ENT ROUTES
TO MAKE SURE
THAT AT LEAST
ONE OF US
REACHES HIM.



ON THE WAY TO FORT ABHED, DHAVAL HAD TO PASS
THROUGH SUMITRASEN'S DWELLING. WHEN HE
SPOKE TO ONE OF SUMITRASEN'S FAITHFUL
SERVANTS, A BHIL —

I HAVE ORGAN-
ISED AN ARMY
OF BHILS IN THE
MOUNTAINS. YOU
MAY USE IT TO
FIGHT THE TREACH-
EROUS MINISTERS.

THAT MEANS I
CAN PROCEED TO
FORT ABHED WITH
GOOD NEWS.



NEXT MORNING, WHEN DHAVAL ARRIVED AT FORT ABHED, A MONK MET HIM.

SATYASHREYA,
CHANDRASENA
AND LALITA
HAVE ALREADY
LEFT FOR
FORT LALIT.

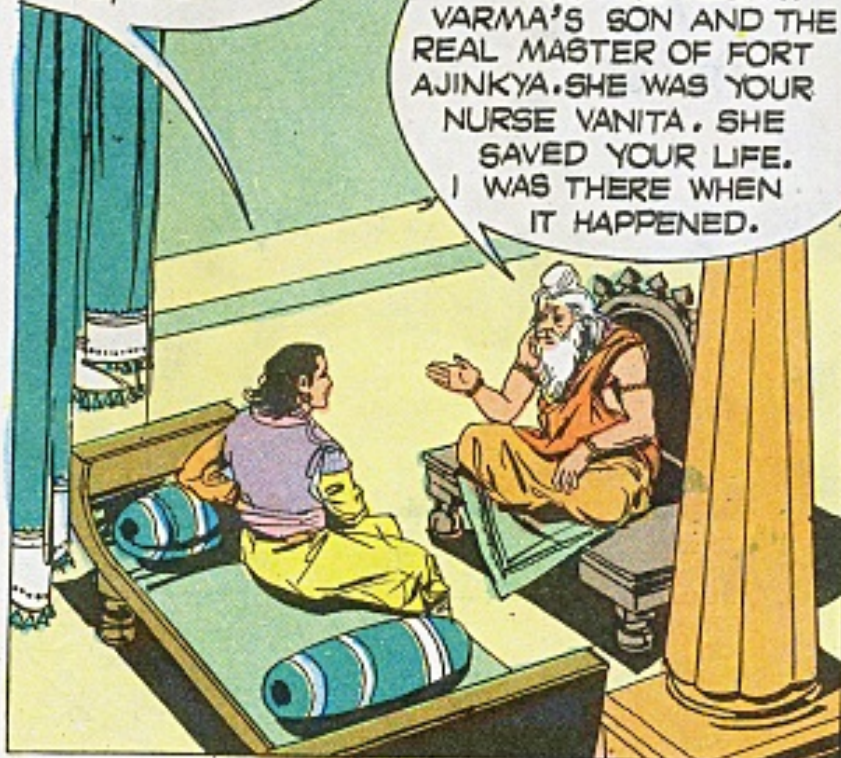
I'LL WAIT HERE TILL
SALHAN AND VIJAL JOIN
ME. I WONDER WHERE
VANACHARI IS!



LATER, AS THE MONK AND DHAVAL SAT TALKING—

I WONDER WHY
VANACHARI IS SO
FOND OF ME!

I WILL TELL YOU WHY.
YOU ARE KEERTI
VARMA'S SON AND THE
REAL MASTER OF FORT
AJINKYA. SHE WAS YOUR
NURSE VANITA. SHE
SAVED YOUR LIFE.
I WAS THERE WHEN
IT HAPPENED.



AND THE MONK TOLD HIM ALL ABOUT THE
COLD-BLOODED MURDER.

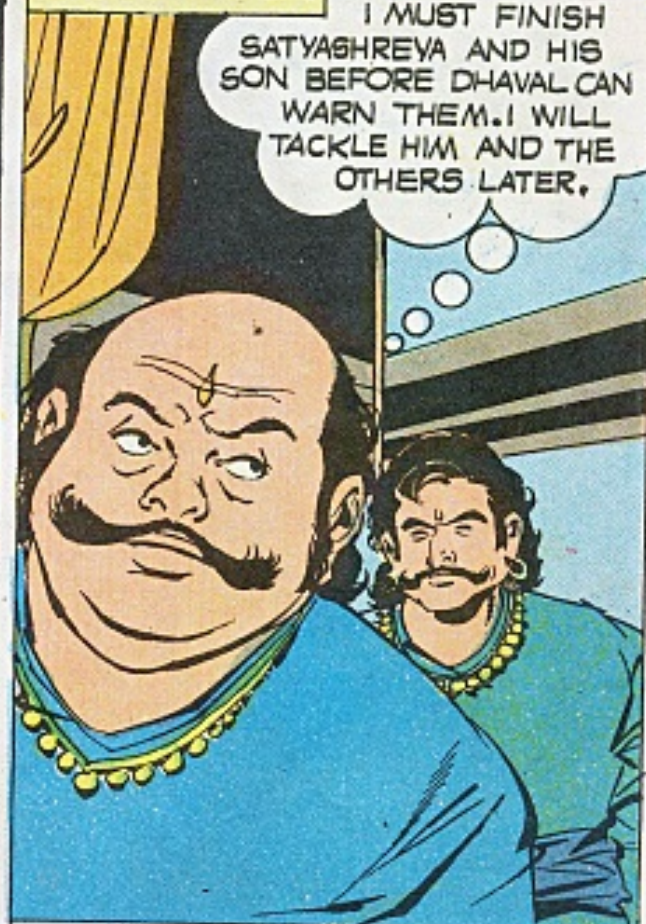
THAT EXPLAINS
EVERYTHING! MY
FATHER'S GHOST...
VANACHARI'S CON-
CERN... I WILL NOT
REST TILL I HAVE EX-
POSED THE FOUL
CRIME AND BROUGHT
PEACE TO MY
FATHER'S SOUL.



THE NEXT DAY, SALHAN AND VIJAL ARRIVED AT FORT
ABHED.

MEANWHILE, CHANDA VARMA, AFTER
CONSULTING CHANDRACHUD, WAS ALSO
PLANNING TO LEAVE WITH HIS ARMY
FOR FORT LALIT.

I MUST FINISH
SATYASHREYA AND HIS
SON BEFORE DHAVAL CAN
WARN THEM. I WILL
TACKLE HIM AND THE
OTHERS LATER.

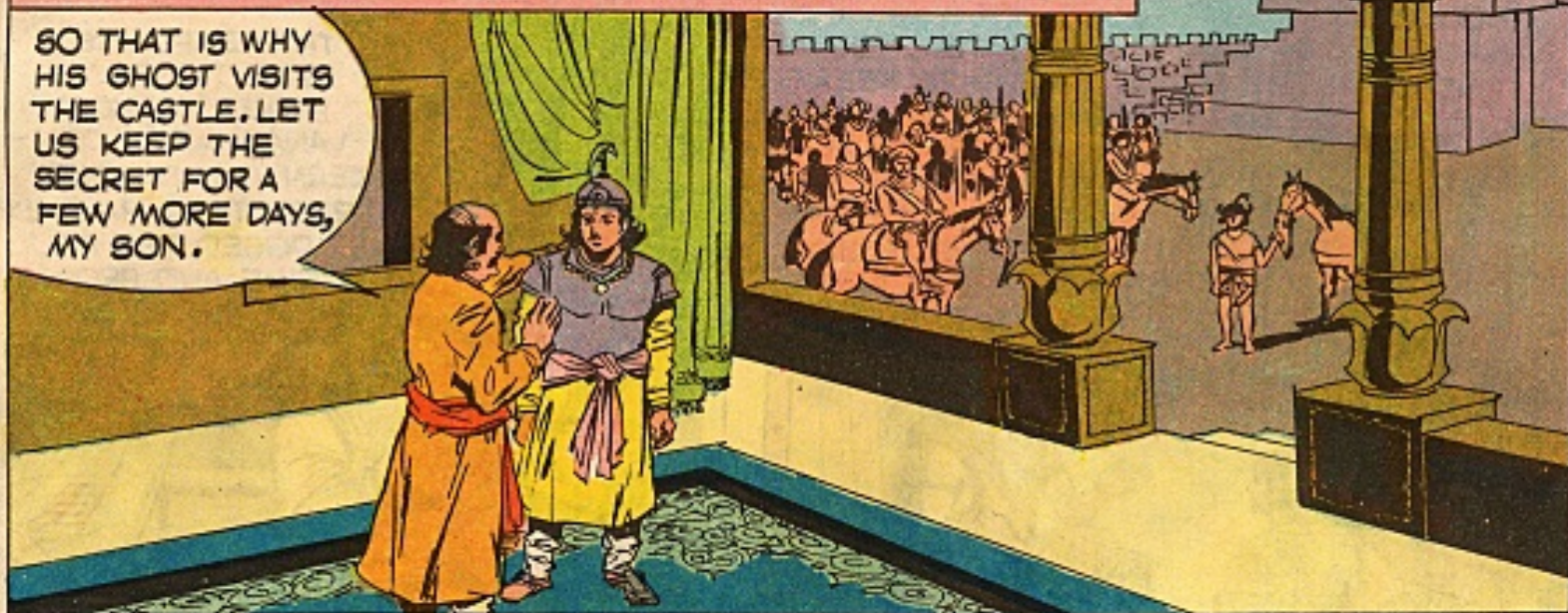


CHANDRACHUD
MUST BE DEFEATED.
THE PRINCE SHALL BE
FREED, AND DECLARED
KING OF THE LAND. YOU
GO AHEAD AND WARN
SATYASHREYA. I'LL
FOLLOW LATER WITH
THE BHIL ARMY.



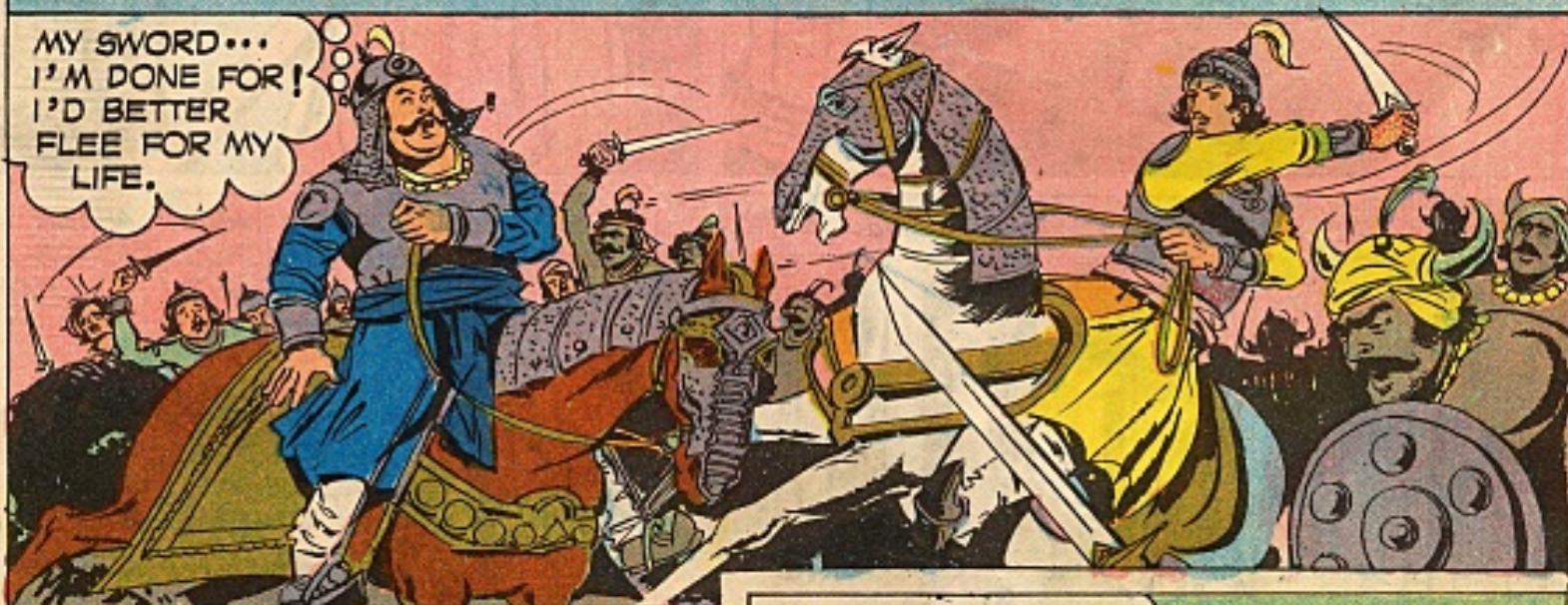
DHAVAL, HOWEVER, REACHED FORT LALIT WITH THE BHIL ARMY BEFORE CHANDA VARMA AND HIS MEN. HE TOLD SATYASHREYA ALL THAT THE MONK HAD TOLD HIM.

SO THAT IS WHY HIS GHOST VISITS THE CASTLE. LET US KEEP THE SECRET FOR A FEW MORE DAYS, MY SON.



CHANDA VARMA'S ARMY SOON ARRIVED AT FORT LALIT. A TERRIBLE BATTLE WAS FOUGHT.

MY SWORD...
I'M DONE FOR!
I'D BETTER
FLEE FOR MY
LIFE.



VICTORY
IS OURS!

CHANDA
VARMA
HAS RUN
AWAY! THE
COWARD!



SATYASHREYA'S
ARMY WAS JUBILANT.

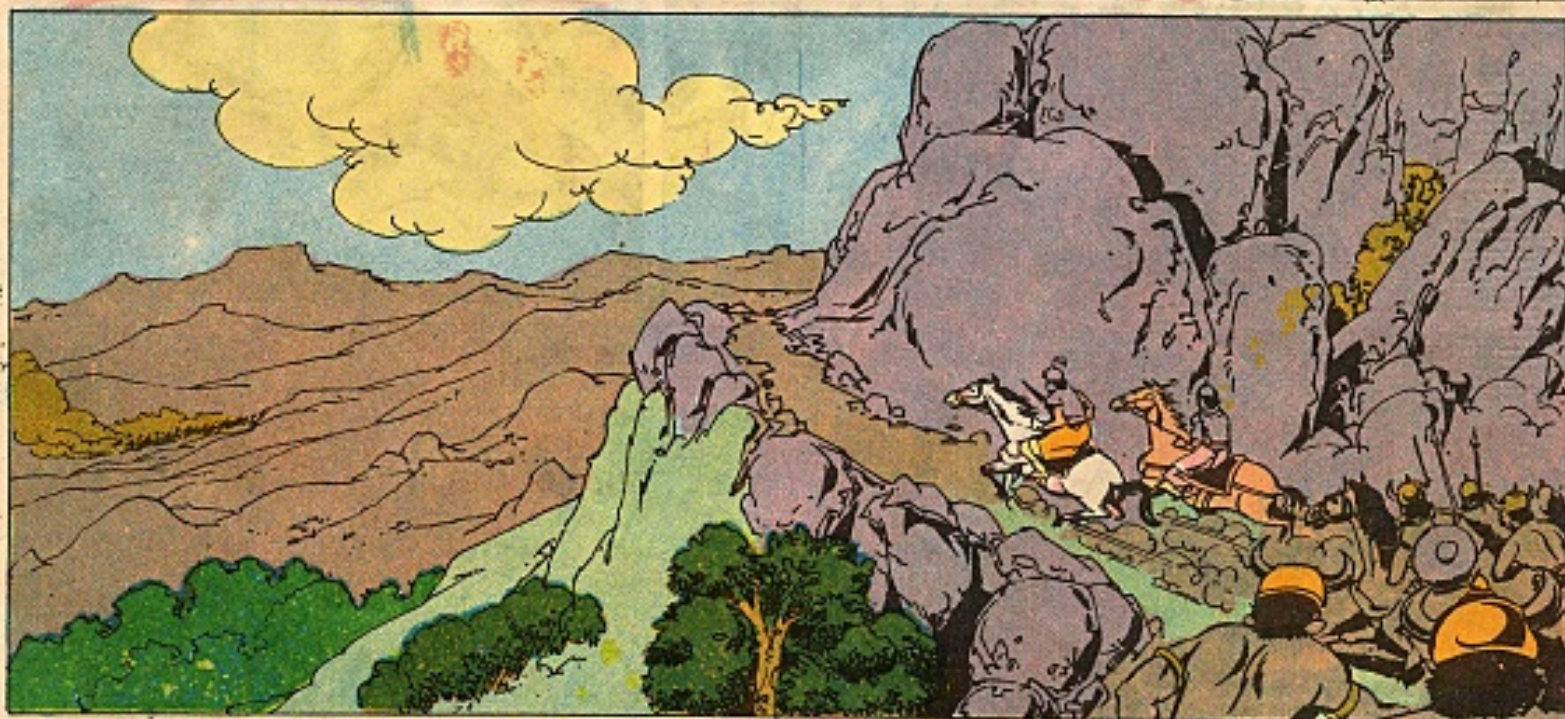
MY BRAVE MEN, WE WILL
CELEBRATE LATER, WE
HAVE YET TO RES-
CUE THE PRINCE
FROM FORT
PRASAD.



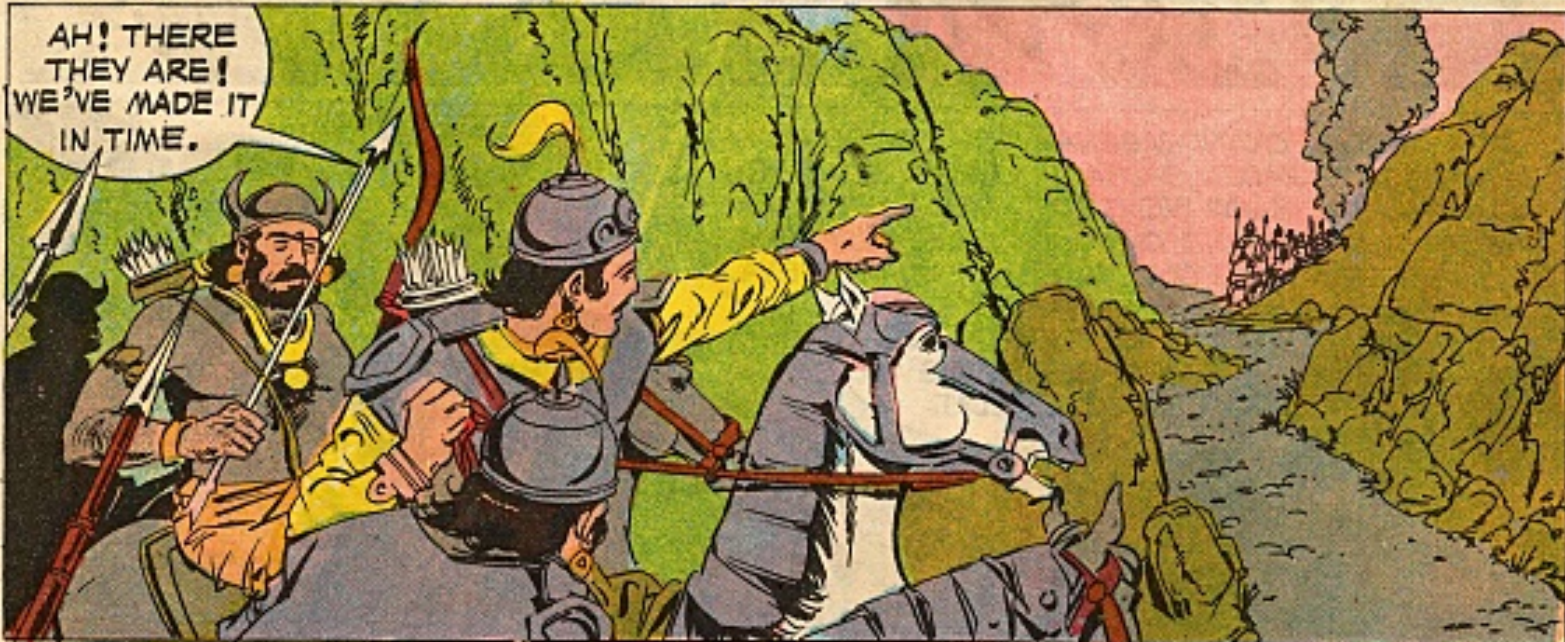
BUT WHEN DHAVAL, CHANDRASENA AND THEIR MEN REACHED FORT PRASAD, CHANDRACHUD, ALONG WITH THE PRINCE AND A SMALL ARMY WAS ALREADY ON HIS WAY TO KALYAN.

ALAS! OUR
BIRD HAS
FLOWN.

DO NOT LOSE HOPE. I
KNOW A SHORT CUT. IT'S
DANGEROUS BUT IT WILL
TAKE US TO THE BOR-
DER BEFORE
OUR ENEMY.



AH! THERE
THEY ARE!
WE'VE MADE IT
IN TIME.



WHEN CHANDRACHUD AND HIS MEN DREW NEAR,
DHAVAL, CHANDRASENA AND THEIR MEN CHARGED.

THAT COWARD,
CHANDA VARMA, IS
WITH THEM. I'LL
TAKE HIM ON.
YOU FIGHT
CHANDRACHUD.



AT LAST CHANDRACHUD SURRENDERED.

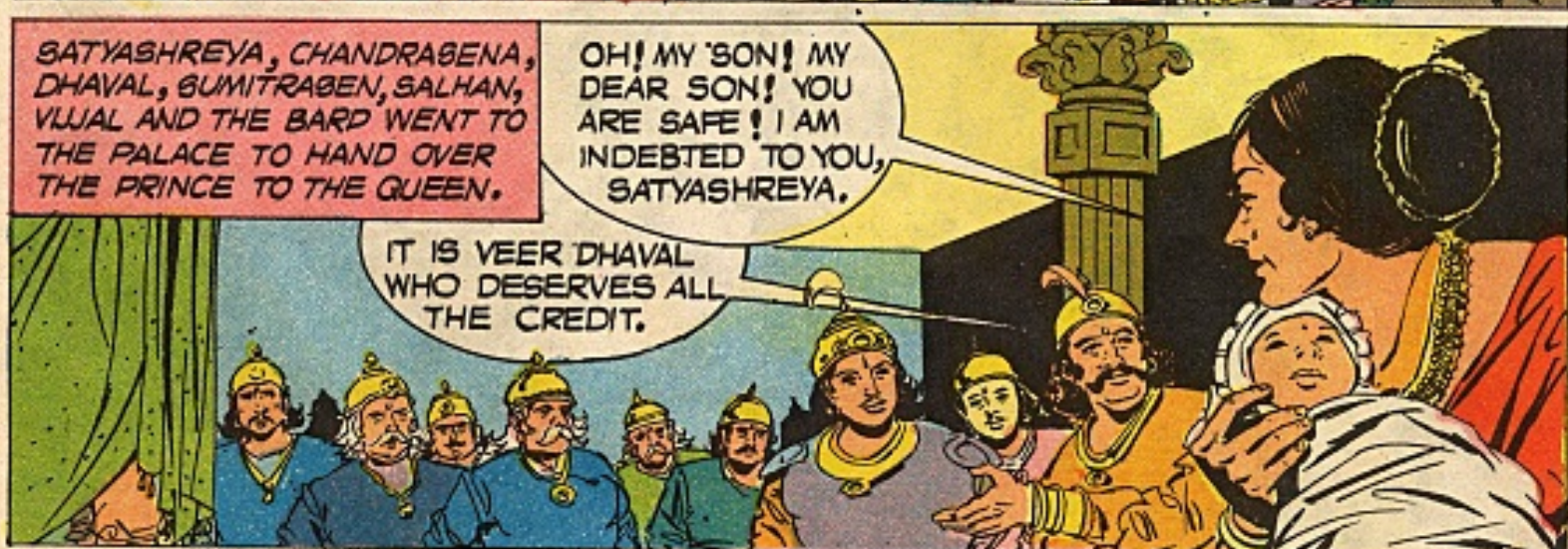
WHILE THEY'RE
BUSY WITH THE PRINCE,
I'D BETTER ESCAPE.



SATYASHREYA, CHANDRASENA,
DHAVAL, SUMITRASEN, SALHAN,
VIJAL AND THE BARD WENT TO
THE PALACE TO HAND OVER
THE PRINCE TO THE QUEEN.

OH! MY SON! MY
DEAR SON! YOU
ARE SAFE! I AM
INDEBTED TO YOU,
SATYASHREYA.

IT IS VEER DHAVAL
WHO DESERVES ALL
THE CREDIT.



MEANWHILE, CHANDA VARMA WHO WAS BACK AT FORT AJINKYA, HAD NOT GIVEN UP HOPE. HE WENT TO DURJAT AND UNMATT.

DHAVAL
MUST DIE!

HE MUST, MUSTN'T HE?
SO YOU CAN FINISH US
OFF TOO AND MARRY
LALITA. SEIZE HIM,
UNMATT! WE SHALL
HANG HIM AT THE
GALLOWS MEANT
FOR DHAVAL.

CHANDA VARMA WENT TO THE
GALLOWS, A REPENTANT SOUL.

FORGIVE ME,
DHAVAL.

AS DURJAT AND UNMATT RODE AWAY, THEY WERE
FOLLOWED BY THE GHOST AND DRIVEN TO THEIR
DEATH.

E-E-EAH!
DURJ-A-A-AT!

HELP!

AFTER LEAVING THE QUEEN, DHAVAL AND THE OTHERS WENT TO THE CRYSTAL PILLAR
AND PAID HOMAGE TO THE OLD MASTER OF THE CASTLE.

FATHER, YOUR SON
HAS BEEN INSTALLED AS
THE RIGHTFUL MASTER
OF FORT AJINKYA.

AND MY DAUGHTER
SHALL BE HIS BRIDE.
YOU MAY REST
IN PEACE.



AMAR CHITRA KATHA

HISTORY • MYTHOLOGY • LEGEND

- 11 KRISHNA
- 12 SHAKUNTALA
- 13 THE PANDAVA PRINCES
- 14 SAVITRI
- 15 RAMA
- 16 NALA DAMAYANTI
- 17 HARISCHANDRA
- 18 THE SONS OF RAMA
- 19 HANUMAN
- 20 MAHABHARATA
- 21 CHANAKYA
- 22 BUDDHA
- 23 SHIVAJI
- 24 RANA PRATAP
- 25 PRITHVIRAJ CHAUHAN
- 26 KARNA
- 27 KACHA
- 28 VIKRAMADITYA
- 29 SHIVA PARVATI
- 30 VASAVADATTA
- 31 SUDAMA
- 32 GURU GOBIND SINGH
- 33 HARSHA
- 34 BHEESHMA
- 35 ABHIMANYU
- 36 MIRABAI
- 37 ASHOKA
- 38 PRAHLAD
- 39 PANCHATANTRA I
- 40 TANAJI
- 41 CHHATRASAL
- 42 PARASHURAMA
- 43 BANDA BAHADUR
- 44 PADMINI
- 45 JATAKA TALES I
- 46 VALMIKI
- 47 GURU NANAK
- 48 TARABAI
- 49 RANJIT SINGH
- 50 RAM SHASTRI
- 51 RANI OF JHANSI
- 52 ULOOPI
- 53 BAJI RAO I
- 54 CHAND BIBI
- 55 KABIR
- 56 SHER SHAH
- 57 DRONA
- 58 SURYA
- 59 URVASHI
- 60 ADI SHANKARA
- 61 GHATOTKACHA
- 62 TULSIDAS
- 63 SUKANYA
- 64 DURGADAS
- 65 ANIRUDHA
- 66 ZARATHUSHTRA
- 67 THE LORD OF LANKA
- 68 TUKARAM
- 69 AGASTYA
- 70 VASANTASENA
- 71 INDRA & SHACHI
- 72 DRAUPADI
- 73 SUBHADRA
- 74 AHILYABAI HOLKAR
- 75 TANSEN
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- 78 SHRIDATTA
- 79 JATAKA TALES II

- 80 VISHWAMITRA
- 81 THE SYAMANTAKA GEM
- 82 MAHAVIRA
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- 86 ANANDA MATH
- 87 BIRBAL THE JUST
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- 93 KANNAGI
- 94 NARSINH MEHTA
- 95 JASMA OF THE ODES
- 96 SHARAN KAUR
- 97 CHANDRAHASA
- 98 PUNDALIK & SAKHU
- 99 RAJ SINGH
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- 101 VALI
- 102 NAGANANDA
- 103 MALAVIKA
- 104 RANI DURGAVATI
- 105 DASHARATHA
- 106 RANA SANGA
- 107 PRADYUMNA
- 108 VIDYASAGAR
- 109 TACHCHOLI OTHENAN
- 110 SULTANA RAZIA

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children with their
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- 111 SATI & SHIVA
- 112 KRISHNA & RUKMINI
- 113 RAJA BHOJA
- 114 GURU TEGH BAHADUR
- 115 PAREEKSHIT
- 116 KADAMBARI
- 117 DHIRUVA & ASHTAVAKRA
- 118 KING KUSHA
- 119 RAJA RAJA CHOLA
- 120 DAYANANDA
- 121 VEER DHAVAL
- 122 ANCESTORS OF RAMA
- 123 EKANATH
- 124 SATWANT KAUR
- 125 UDAYANA
- 126 JATAKA TALES III
- 127 THE GITA
- 128 VEER HAMMIR
- 129 MALATI & MADHAVA
- 130 GARUDA
- 131 BIRBAL THE WISE
- 132 RANAK DEVI
- 133 MARYADA RAMA
- 134 BABUR
- 135 DEVI CHOUDHURANI
- 136 RABINDRANATH TAGORE
- 137 SOORDAS
- 138 PANCHATANTRA II
- 139 PRINCE HRITADHWAJA
- 140 HUMAYUN
- 141 PRABHAVATI
- 142 CHANDRA SHEKHAR AZAD

- 143 A BAG OF GOLD COINS
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- 156 BAGHA JATIN
- 157 MANONMANI
- 158 ANGULIMALA
- 159 THE TIGER AND THE WOODPECKER
- 160 TALES OF VISHNU
- 161 AMRAPALI
- 162 YAYATI
- 163 PANCHATANTRA III
- 164 TALES OF SHIVA
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- 173 KOCHUNNI
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- 175 HARI SINGH NALWA
- 176 TALES OF DURGA
- 177 KRISHNA AND SHISHUPALA
- 178 RAMAN OF TENALI
- 179 PAURAVA AND ALEXANDER
- 180 INDRA AND SHIBIRAJA
- 181 GURU HAR GOBIND
- 182 THE BATTLE FOR SRINAGAR
- 183 RANA KUMBHA
- 184 ARUNI AND UTTANKA
- 185 HITOPADESHA II
- 186 TIRUPPANA & KANAKADASA
- 187 TIPU SULTAN
- 188 DR. AMBEDKAR
- 189 THUGSEN
- 190 KANNAPPA
- 191 THE KING IN A PARROT'S BODY
- 192 RANADHIRA
- 193 KAPALA KUNDALA
- 194 GOPAL & THE COWHERD
- 195 JATAKA TALES IV
- 196 HOTHAL
- 197 THE RAINBOW PRINCE
- 198 TALES OF ARJUNA
- 199 CHANDRALALAT
- 200 AKBAR
- 201 NACHIKETA
- 202 KALIDASA
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